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Cutler Most Influential with Ike

Robert Cutler, special assistant to the president, is described by Fortune magazine today as potentially "the most influential single figure in forming national policy (next to Eisenhower himself)."

Cutler, a Boston lawyer and banker and reserve brigadier general, reorganized the National Security Council at Eisenhower's direction. He now runs the council for the President and is also chairman of the council's Planning Board, which Fortune calls "the central switchboard of security planning in the government."

Fortune says that Eisenhower's "most significant contribution to the executive technique" may turn out to be his use of the N.S.C. as "the strategic planning body at the apex of the government." Founded in 1947, the council formerly met only intermittently, but now has at least one session a week (on Thursdays) with Eisenhower regularly in attendance.

The article (written by Charles J. V. Murphy, of Fortune's board of editors and formerly a special adviser to Secretary Thomas K. Finletter and General Hoyt S. Vandenberg) includes Cutler among the eight men on the White House staff who "stand closest to the President."

The other seven: Sherman Adams, Dr. Gabriel Hauge, James C. Hagerty, C. D. Jackson, Major General Wilton B. Persons (U.S.A. retired), Bernard M. Shanley and Thomas E. Stephens.

Although "practically everything" that concerns the President funnels through Adams (the Assistant to the President), all these eight White House staff members may see the President on their own.

Two of them (Adams and Press Secretary Hagerty) share with Secretary John Foster Dulles and his brother Allen Dulles of Central Intelligence the privilege of waking the President at night on a matter of national consequence.

None has yet exercised this privilege, the Fortune writer adds. The word of Stalin's death was a "hairline case," but the president's advisers decided that the news would keep until morning.

Press Secretary Hagerty also has a unique privilege: he alone may speak publicly for the President.

Adams serves as Eisenhower's presidential "chief of staff" (although the term is not encouraged around the White House because of the President's distaste for military analogies), Mr. Murphy writes.

Most Cabinet members must go through Adam's office to see the President. But rumors that Adams is isolating the President, or quietly gathering power into his own hands, are far from the truth, the writer continues:

"Adams is no Richelieu or Colonel House. A simple rule guides him: to see that the President's job is done in the way the President wants."

Among the eight staff members, the man with the closest personal relationship with Eisenhower is General "Jerry" Persons, who has known the President since both were junior officers in the 1930's. Formerly the Army's negotiator with Congress, he is now Eisenhower's chief Congressional liaison.

Persons, Cutler, Shanley and Jackson all attend the Friday Cabinet sessions, where Dr. Hauge monitors the agenda. Assistant Hauge, at 38, is the senior White House adviser on trade, finance, and economic affairs. He also has the portfolio for scientific and technological matters. He will be the link between the President and the new Council of Economic Advisers.

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Special Counsel Shanley is adviser on the legal aspects of legislation; he formerly was counsel for the New Jersey State Republican Committee.

Special Assistant Jackson is adviser on psychological warfare, usually assists in the preparation of important speeches, and is consulted by the President on foreign-policy statements.

Appointments Secretary Stephens has the task of trying to keep the President's day as free as possible for national business. Stephens spends the equivalent of one working day each week in expressing regrets.

"Eisenhower has laid down a rule," the Fortune writer reports, "that, except for an occasional friend, he will see only people who (a) have government business to talk over with him or (b) are connected with national organizations or affairs to which the White House can properly impart the prestige of its endorsement. Under this reasoning the Cotton Queen and the Citrus Queen lost out while the heads of the Red Cross, the American Cancer Society, and the National Safety Council were welcomed."

Eisenhower insists that his staff block out problems for him in advance. To this end the staff meets every morning — and not merely to farm out the chores. "The White House staff," says Adams, "is a clearinghouse for policy matters. These meetings are to make sure that these policies are properly coordinated." (Another staff member adds, "Our job is to compress the President's work into essentials—to sharpen everything up for discussion with him.")

Says Bernard Shusley: "The change in the White House is not things, but even more in concept and attitude. It is an Administration man or one-clique show. It is an Administration